UHI

MSc Sustainable Mountain Development

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Modules

Contents

Academic Year 2024/25 Modules

Module	Previous title	Code	Module contact	Core/Optional
Semester One – starts 2 Sept 2024				
Global Mountain Geographies	*Environmental & Social Issues in Mountain Areas*	**UF811101**	**Rosalind Bryce**	**Core**
Understanding the Policy Environment	*Policy Analysis*	**UL411983**	**Eilidh Macphail**	**Core**
Communities, Nature & Sustainability	*Communities & Nature*	UF811100	David Skene	Optional
Quantitative research and data analysis*	*New module*	UX311001	Edward Graham	Optional*
Sustainable land use	*Sustainable Land Use & Renewable Energy*	UF811104	Bobby Macaulay	Optional
Water Resources in a Changing Climate	*No change*	UF711984	Richard Gosling	Optional
Semester Two (S2) Starts 20 Jan 2024				
Understanding Sustainability Discourses	*Sustainable Development*	**UF811102**	**Rebecca Smith**	**Core**
Agroecology: Regenerative Food Systems	*New module*	UF811206	David Skene	Optional
Biodiversity management	*No change*	UC111959	Matthew Curran	Optional
Extreme weather	*New module*	UF811984	Edward Graham	Optional
Qualitative inquiry*	*New module*	UX211935	Kara Smith	Optional*
Sustainable deer management	*No change*	UD411980	**Rosalind Bryce**	Optional
The Economics of Community Wealth Building	*Local Economic Development*	UL111100	David Skene	Optional
Working with Communities	*Developing Communities*	UL411984	**Eilidh Macphail**	Optional
Semester One/Two (over two semesters)				
Research Dissertation	*No change*	UF811103	**Rosalind Bryce** **Eilidh Macphail**	MSc level

If you are planning to continue to dissertation level, we strongly advise you to take QRDA or QI as one of your three optional modules

- To complete to PgCert level: 3 core modules (60 credits)
- To complete to PgDip level: 3 core modules & 3 optional modules (120 credits)
- To complete to MSc level: 3 core modules, 3 optional modules & dissertation (180 credits)
- All modules are 20 credit modules, apart from the Research Dissertation (60 credits)
- **All optional modules run subject to sufficient numbers of students enrolling**

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Core Modules

Global Mountain Geographies (S1)
Module code: UF811101
Semester One
Module Leader: Rosalind Bryce

This module provides an interdisciplinary foundation in mountain geographies, equipping students with the knowledge and perspectives to understand the biophysical and social dynamics of mountain areas in a global context. This will allow students to apply analytical approaches to support sustainable development in mountain areas, through a comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions at different spatial scales and in different geographic contexts.

This module is a foundation for all aspects of the MSc, designed to ensure broad understanding of the various elements of the environmental and societal systems of mountain areas, at the global scale. The integrated understanding of these elements and their interactions is an essential basis for all aspects of sustainable mountain development, which relates to not only mountain areas, but also regions downstream.

This module enables students to develop their knowledge and understanding of montane environmental and societal systems.

Learning outcomes:
1. Understand the fundamental elements and processes of the environmental and societal systems of mountain areas with reference to different international mountain ranges.
2. Identify and evaluate key interactions between these processes, and drivers of change as a basis for fostering sustainable development in these areas.
3. Analyse and discuss relevant case studies which illustrate these processes and drivers of change in the context of sustainable mountain development.

Assessment 1: 2000 words (40%)
Assessment 2: 2500 words (45%)
Assessment 3: Weekly Discussions (15%)

Indicative Content:
1. Defining mountain areas: topographic, ecological/land cover, cultural, and integrated approaches;
2. Biogeophysical processes and their interactions: geology, climate, soils, ecosystems;
3. Mountain economies, their components, and changes over time: agriculture, forests, mining, water, biodiversity and landscape conservation, hunting, tourism;
4. Patterns of land ownership and use;
5. Changes in demography: driving forces and trends;
6. The interactions of policies at different scales as driving forces of change in mountain areas;
7. Climate change in mountain areas and the potential impacts

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Understanding the Policy Environment (S1)
Module code: UL411983
Semester One
 Module Leader: Eilidh Macphail

Public policy plays a crucial role in shaping society and addressing complex social issues, so an understanding of the policy process and policy environment is essential for anyone with an interest in sustainability. This module seeks to explore what policy is, how it is made and analysed, and the complex policy environment around this.

Learning outcomes:
1. Understand and explain the key stages of the policy-making process
2. Evaluate different concepts and theoretical approaches utilised to understand public policy and the policy environment.
3. Critically assess, discuss and utilise these concepts and theoretical approaches in the analysis of empirical cases.

Assessment 1: Essay 2000 words (40%)
Assessment 2: Report 2000 words (40%)
Assessment 3: Continual assessment, 500 words (20%)

Indicative Content:

Students will be introduced to theoretical approaches and concepts which aid understanding of how policy is made and the significance of the policy environment, and these will be further explored through sustainability-related case studies

Understanding Sustainability Discourses (S2)
Module code: UF811102
Semester Two
Module Leader: Rebecca Smith

Overseeing the implementation of the sustainable development goals is an established part of governance today with implications for action across most working sectors. This module will develop students' critical capacities and skills for differentiating between the range of interpretations within 'sustainability discourse' today. They will explore the contradictions between sustainable development and economic growth policies, and the impact of this on deepening global inequalities. This will equip students to better understand the difference between 'greenwashing' approaches and genuine action for sustainable development.

Learning outcomes:
1. Develop an understanding of the various discourses surrounding 'sustainability' and the historical context of the Sustainable Development concept and the introduction of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Critically explore how consumerism and economic growth within the Global North leads to unsustainable development, environmental catastrophe, and climate breakdown in the Global South.
3. Demonstrate a critical and theoretical understanding of the ladder of sustainability and how development theory can shape strong/weak approaches.
4. Critically reflect on the main operational problems and opportunities within sustainability discourse and how this shapes the implementation of sustainable development policy today.

Assessment 1: Essay, 2500 words (50%)
Assessment 2: Reflective report of continuous discussion board activities, 2500 words (50%)

Indicative Content:
Students will explore the various discourses around 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' and develop an understanding of its historical context. They will critically evaluate the concept of sustainable development and the global and national policy frameworks for its promotion. They will be able to understand how economic and development theories shape whether approaches to sustainability are weak or strong. They will be able to critically reflect on the usefulness of current methods and indicators for measuring sustainability and global action towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

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Optional Modules

Communities, Nature and Sustainability (S1)
Module code: UF811100
Semester One
Module Leader: David Skene

This module explores the importance of rural areas by investigating the inter-relationship between humans and the natural environment. The way we think about the natural environment influences the way in which we manage the natural environment, and in turn the strength of our links to the natural environment influences the ways in which we think about it. This module emphasises the inter-relatedness of the physical, social, and cultural links with the natural environment and the implications of this for what we mean by the term "rural development".

Learning Outcomes:
1. Understand and critique the various definitions of rural areas, through the fundamental linkages between the environmental, social, economic, and social equity aspects of rural communities.
2. Identify and critically evaluate the main operational problems and opportunities in implementing sustainable development in rural areas.
3. Analyse and discuss relevant case studies which illustrate key aspects in the theory and practice of human ecology.

Assessment 1: Essay, 2500 words (50%)
Assessment 2: Oral presentation, 30 minutes (50%)

Indicative Content
The module introduces the discipline of human ecology as the relationship between people and their environment and analyses this in a rural context. The subject has an inter-disciplinary approach, and students begin with an analysis of biological systems, moving on to look at human social systems, and then exploring the feedback loops caused by the interaction of these systems.

In particular, students will explore the organisation of socio-ecological systems as complex adaptive systems, using examples of ecological succession and community dynamics to illustrate. Students will then be encouraged to consider different perceptions of nature and natural systems management, and to relate these to current issues of the interaction between the human and natural environment ecosystem. The history of human management of the rural environment, and the implications for current and future policies of sustainable rural development will be emphasised using documented international examples.

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Quantitative Research and Data Analysis (QRDA) (S1)
Module code: UX311001
Semester One
Module Leader: Edward Graham

Note: if you are planning to continue to dissertation level, it is strongly recommended you take this module or Qualitative Inquiry

The module will provide students with the opportunity to explore a variety of quantitative and statistical techniques for the successful design, implementation, and methodology of research studies. It includes data collection, descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing and correlation analysis as well as other techniques

Learning Outcomes:
1. Critically select appropriate statistical and quantitative techniques for collecting and analysing data.
2. Understand and use effectively different advanced statistical techniques, both parametric and non-parametric.
3. Present analysis in a fully referenced report

Assessment 1: Multiple Choice Assessment (30%)
Assessment 2: Research Report, 3000 words (60%)
Assessment 3: Continuous Discussions (10%)

Indicative Content:
Students will develop the use of quantitative techniques for exploring research questions. This will include data sampling (data types and sampling techniques), descriptive statistics (measures of central tendency, standard deviation, variance, histograms) and hypothesis testing and inferential statistics. Students will be introduced to statistical testing and made aware of the necessity of checking whether their dataset fulfils the conditions for using a particular statistical test. Examples will be given of parametric and non-parametric tests. Students will be introduced to correlation analysis as well as to advanced quantitative methods such as principal components analysis and other techniques.

Through the asynchronous discussion board, students will be encouraged to express their learning, to produce practical examples and to summarise and analyse examples in the published literature.

The final assessment will require students to present their own quantitative analysis in a fully referenced report or to produce a critical analysis of quantitative techniques in published literature.

Sustainable Land Use (S1)

Module code: UF811104
Semester One
Module Leader: Bobby Macaulay

This module will provide an overview of integrated land use concepts and activities which relate to sustainable development in rural communities. Module material focuses on opportunities for improving the sustainability of 'traditional' rural land uses and new opportunities for land uses.

Research aim: To review and analyse knowledge and issues relating to land use in rural community development, with a focus on both opportunities for improving the sustainability of 'traditional' rural land uses and opportunities for new and innovative integrated land uses.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Gain an awareness and critical understanding of the policy context and key drivers for sustainable land use and renewable energy as they relate to community development.
2. Demonstrate a broad understanding of the key concepts which relate to sustainable land use in rural Scotland.
3. Critically discuss and present key ideas about sustainable land use, including analysis of case studies.
4. Formulate and defend informed conclusions of the overall relevance of key land-based opportunities for sustainable rural development.

Assessment 1: Essay, 2000 words (40%)
Assessment 2: Essay, 2500 words (45%)
Assessment 3: Weekly Discussions (15%)

Indicative Content:
1. A history of land use in rural Scotland
2. Key drivers for sustainable rural land use
3. Key concepts for sustainable rural land use (ecosystem approach/ multi-functionality/ partnerships/ transition communities)
4. Sustainable rural land use and rural communities (Key areas and case studies)
   a. Rural/local agriculture and localised (community based) food production
   b. Sustainable forestry and community woodlands
   c. Estate communities, estate land management and sporting land use
   d. Recreation and tourism
   e. Nature conservation and biodiversity
   f. Renewable energy
5. Case studies of integrated land uses and management, including community ownership and governance: Exemplar community woodland case study; Sustainable (integrated) estate management case study; Exemplar community estate; Transition town/village case study

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Water Resources in a Changing Climate (S1)
Module code: UF711984
Semester One
Module Leader: Richard Gosling

This module is delivered by a tutor with over 18 years combined experience in water resources regulation, flood management and climate change impact assessment. The course explores the way our water use has been managed up to now and looks at how, under a changing climate, adaptation strategies are being developed to cope with an increasingly variable resource.

The course is aimed at students currently or hoping to be employed in water-related industries such as public water supply, hydropower, beverages (including brewing and distilleries) and agriculture. It is particularly suitable for environmental managers, water resource practitioners, hydrologists and environmental scientists. It also provides relevant CPD for government agency staff such as the environment and conservation agencies where their remit includes the water environment.

It can help those with an interest in water management understand the background against which the regulation of the water environment has been set and explores the way all stakeholders have a role to play in securing the benefits we get from a healthy water environment both now and in the future as we adapt to climate change.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Critically understand both the components and processes of the water cycle and the different methods used to monitor and analyse these in terms of both water resource quantity and quality
2. Critically understand what is meant by water resources and gain detailed knowledge on the water resource issues common within the rural and mountain environments such as pollution, floods and droughts.
3. Understand the projected impacts of climate change on water resources and demonstrate a critical awareness of how moving to Net Zero is expected to influence our use of water.
4. Using relevant case studies, critically assess the potential of tools used in water management and climate change adaptation

Assessment 1: Essay/report/critique, 2000 words (35%)
Assessment 2: Essay/ report/ critique, 2000 words (55%)
Assessment 3: Discussions (10%)

Indicative Content
Explore concepts of sustainable water management from both theoretical and practical viewpoints, including best practice case studies of how the needs of the water user can be met without compromising the benefits that a healthy water environment provides to our society.

1. Using the latest projections for the UK, the course provides an in-depth assessment of how climate change could impact the availability of water for a range of uses and looks at how

we can adapt to this.

2. Flexible study: this module is delivered fully online and is based around a weekly presentation posted on the virtual learning environment along with accompanying learning resources such as papers and web links. You will also use web resources, including videos and interactive web sites, for extracting and analysing environmental data.

3. The course benefits from a themed weekly discussion board between students, accompanied by a number of optional Webex tutorials which will consider topical water-related issues.

4. Whilst the course focuses on examples from Scotland and the rest of the UK, it sets these within the wider European and global contexts. Examples of good practice from around the world are used and students from outside of the UK routinely contribute with their local experiences.

Agroecology – Regenerative Food Systems (S2)
Module code: UF811206
Semester two
Module Leader: David Skene

The food system is at the centre of socio-ecological transformations. This module seeks to explore the extent to which agricultural practice adheres to the principles of sustainable development. This will be examined in the changing policy context of sustainable food systems with a range of established and emerging approaches and theoretical stances considered, with a focus on agroecology and the opportunity to direct your learning. It will also consider the post–productivist transition of agriculture towards sustainable development in rural communities.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Critically evaluate the fundamental linkages between sustainable development, agriculture, community and culture in dependent communities.
2. Critically analyse the main theoretical and policy issues related to sustainability transitions with regard to agriculture through the lens of Agroecology and associated approaches.
3. Analyse and critically evaluate the merit of an approach using a case study which illustrates key aspects in the theory and practice of a transition in sustainable agriculture within a particular local/regional/national policy context.

Assessment 1: Essay 2000 words (50%)
Assessment 2: Research Project, 2000 words or equivalent (50%)

Indicative Content
This module seeks to explore the policy and theoretical context of how agricultural development may adhere to the principles of sustainable development. This module will examine both the policy context and theoretical context of agricultural. It will examine the post–productivist transition of agriculture towards sustainable development in the context of Agroecological approaches.

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Biodiversity Management (S2)
Module code: UC111959
Semester Two
Module Leader: Matthew Curran

The module explores the methods by which biodiversity management can be achieved, considering strategy and policy at international, regional and local level and implementation. It examines the theories and scientific principles which underpin implementation. The module also critically considers the importance and effectiveness of biodiversity management in the context of sustainable development. The aim of the module is to provide students with the opportunity and tools to understand the scientific principles underpinning biodiversity management and critically assess how effectively biodiversity management operates, particularly in the context of sustainable development

Learning Outcomes:
1. Understand the scientific principles underpinning biodiversity management.
2. Evaluate the methods employed for biodiversity conservation as management tools contributing to sustainable development.
3. Understand and discuss the nature of the mechanisms (strategy and policy) that are devised and implemented at local, national and international levels to facilitate biodiversity management.
4. Critically analyse the implications of developments in biodiversity management for sustainable development, particularly in rural and mountain areas.

Assessment 1: Essay, 2000 words (35%)
Assessment 2: Case study report, 2500 words (50%)
Assessment 3: Weekly Discussions (15%)

Indicative Content:
1. levels of biodiversity: genetic, species, ecosystem, landscape;
2. the intrinsic and economic values of biodiversity conservation;
3. threats to biodiversity;
4. the development of the principles and practice of biodiversity conservation as a management tool;
5. frameworks for biodiversity management: hotspots, protected areas, networks; conventions
6. conservation and rural development: the social and economic implications of biodiversity management;
7. integrating biodiversity management with other land management objectives: participatory approaches;
8. the implications of climate change for biodiversity management;
9. investigate recent developments in biodiversity management and critically assess the implications for sustainable development focusing on rural and mountain areas

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Extreme Weather (S2)
Module code: UF811984
Semester Two
Module Leader: [Edward Graham](#)

Extreme weather events are increasing in both intensity and frequency across the globe, many of an unprecedented severity. For example, in 2021, a heatwave of an unprecedented magnitude (with air temperatures up to 49.6°C) affected the Pacific Northwest of North America – far more extreme than climate scientists had expected, even in their worst-case scenarios. In 2022, 40°C was reached for the first time in the UK – this will become a regular occurrence by the latter decades of the current century. Recent high resolution met modelling also indicates that extreme rainfall events, such as those causing flash floods, will become at least four times more likely than they were in the past.

Advances in recent scientific understanding over the past decade, not least from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its three working groups, confirm that these such extreme events are attributable to global warming and would be statistically "impossible" without anthropogenic climate change.

At the same time the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP) has played a crucial role in fostering collaboration among scientists and facilitated the integration of different disciplines, leading to significant scientific advancements in the field of Earth system science. Although the IGBP officially ended in 2015, its legacy continues to influence research and policy discussions linked to climate change and extreme weather events.

All current credible climate emission scenarios indicate that extreme weather events will increase in severity over the coming decades and will continue doing so until the global community properly addresses the climate crisis. Massive adaptation and mitigation issues will undoubtedly plague local, national and international levels of government, and the situation will get a lot worse until it gets better, if at all.

An increased public awareness of weather and climate hazards (e.g. weather warning systems) together with a greater understanding of the impacts of new, unprecedented, individual extreme events to human-induced climate change, is therefore necessary for graduates of the future. The rapidly increasing costs arising due to disasters, will promote an enhanced requirement for extreme climate and hazard experts and responders in both public and private arenas.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Critically analyse and be able to fully express all the different types of extreme weather, the impacts they cause, the risks and hazards posed by them.
2. Critically evaluate the vulnerability of ecological and human systems to extreme weather, including its increasing and unprecedented effect through time.
3. Critically analyse climate attribution and be able to express completely the links between extreme weather and climate change.
4. Critically evaluate meteorology and extreme weather modelling.

5. Critically analyse how to mitigate, adapt and take protection against extreme weather events, in anticipatory and reactionary capacities.

Assessment 1: Report 2500 words (50%)
Assessment 2: Project presentation, 20 minutes (50%)

Indicative Content:

1. Extreme weather types – Heatwaves, droughts, floods and extreme precipitation, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, mid-latitude storms, heavy snowfall, hailstorms, thunderstorms, windstorms, storm surge, the polar vortex.
2. Meteorology of extreme weather – water vapour, energy, cloud formation, weather systems, met modelling
3. Impacts, Mitigation, Adaptation, Vulnerability, Uncertainty, Risk, Hazards
4. Resilience; anticipatory and reactive adaptation; private and public adaptation; autonomous and planned adaptation, adaptive capacity.
5. Extreme weather across the globe (Tropics, Mid-latitudes, Polar regions)
6. Extreme weather in different environments (urban, rural, mountain, coastal

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Qualitative Inquiry (QI) (S2)

Module code: UX211935
Semester Two
Module Leader: [Kara Smith](#)

This module is intended to provide students with the skills necessary to engage in a practical research project of a high standard. It will include an examination of the role of ethics in qualitative research. In addition to a grounding in qualitative research techniques, students will be introduced to quantitative methods including the design and use of questionnaires.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Have a clear understanding of the role and limitations of qualitative inquiry in the context of wider methodological and theoretical perspectives and acknowledging the wider social research context.

2. Be able to critically select from a wide range of qualitative research techniques appropriate for answering a developed research question after critical analysis of appropriate literature

3. Be able to design and plan a piece of qualitative research, justifying the methods chosen for the collection and analysis of qualitative data.

4. Be able to present finding in an appropriate format.

Assessment 1: Poster Presentation (30%)
Assessment 2: Research Proposal (60%)
Assessment 3: Discussion participation (10%)

Indicative Content:

Beginning with an examination of what qualitative research is, the module will continue to consider how it differs from quantitative research, highlighting the advantages and limitations of qualitative research. Different methodological approaches to research will be critically evaluated. These will include:

- Positivism

- Interpretive approaches

- Social constructivism

The nature and structure of the research question and the framing of the question will be examined along with the types of data needed to answer the question and methods of collection.

The role of ethics and the responsibilities of the research in, for example, participatory research and ethnographic research will be critically examined. Justifying of design choices will be considered as well as sample sizes and participant recruitment strategies in different settings.

The relative advantages and disadvantages of different data gathering methods will be compared and contrasted critically and appropriate analysis techniques considered. Finally, the reporting and presenting of qualitative research findings will be examined

Sustainable Deer Management (S2)
Module code: UD411980
Semester Two
Module Leader: Rosalind Bryce

This module will explore the role and position of deer in the Scottish Highlands from sustainable rural development and integrated land management perspectives. Deer are a keystone species in shaping the ecology of mountain environments. They are also a national resource. 'Sustainable deer management' is essential to optimise the multiple public and private benefits associated with deer, whilst minimising negative impacts. Sustainable deer management means managing wild deer by taking account of the full range of environmental, social and economic factors.

This module will explore the montane ecosystem context for deer management planning and deer ecology and behaviour. The module will also explore deer population modelling and cull target setting as well as maximising the economic benefits of deer through paid stalking, eco-tourism and venison marketing. Collaborative management of deer, through deer management groups and wider social impacts and benefits of deer management will also be explored

Learning Outcomes:
1. Critically assess and understand the processes and scientific principles which underpin the concept of sustainable deer management.
2. Evaluate and critically assess processes and techniques relating to deer management planning, from both theoretical and practical perspectives.
3. Critically analyse the objectives for deer management in relation to sustainable land management, particularly in rural and mountain areas.

Assessment 1: Essay - 2000 words (40%)
Assessment 2: Report - 2000 words (50%)
Assessment 3: Weekly Discussions (10%)

Indicative Content:
- General background, wider land use and management context for deer
- The policy, legal and institutional framework
- Deer biology and behaviour
- The impacts of red deer on upland ecosystems and the wider environmental context for deer management
- Integration of deer management with other land uses
- Deer population biology, population modelling and dynamics
- Principles and practice of sustainable deer management; habitat monitoring/deer impact assessments, deer population counts, cull target setting and records, deer welfare.
- Deer management planning and collaborative approaches (Deer Management Groups)

- Deer management and the rural economy (economic benefits and impacts venison marketing etc.)
- Deer management and rural society (Community involvement, human welfare, education etc.)
- Case studies of sustainable deer management

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The Economics of Community Wealth Building (S2)
Module code: UL111100
Semester Two
Module Leader: [Michael Smith](#)
Module Tutor: [David Skene](#)

There are two parts to this module. It begins by examining contemporary and historical theories related to local and regional economic regeneration. The module analyses whether such conventional economic approaches are 'fit for purpose' in a global context of transgressing planetary boundaries and the implications for sustainable place-based local economies seeking enhanced wellbeing.

The second part of this module is about re-thinking conventional economics and challenging students to appraise heterodox economic approaches and thinking for sustainability. Students will evaluate emerging ideas (broadly in area of post-growth) and approaches to modify economic policy to achieve a wellbeing economy focusing on tailored local regeneration goals for future net zero sustainable communities.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Evaluate the effectiveness of contemporary and conventional economic theories in achieving local and regional economic regeneration and a wellbeing economy.
2. Critically analyse the impact and consequences of contemporary and conventional economic theories on local and regional sustainability.
3. Evaluate the theories and principles of wellbeing economics and associated alternative approaches to local and regional economic regeneration.
4. Critically analyse the impacts and consequences of building a wellbeing economy and other alternative economic approaches to achieving a just transition to sustainability at the local and regional level.

 Assessment 1: Essay, 2500 words (50%)
 Assessment 2: Essay, 2500 words (50%)

Indicative Content:
Students will investigate and study the contemporary economic theories behind local and regional economic development and critique the effectiveness and historical attempts at local, rural and regional economic development. Has the underlying theory produced consistent results and had the desired impact in most instances?

Students will progress from here to begin to study new and emerging approaches of economic theory designed to achieve more inclusive economic development and regeneration for peripheral as well as core regions. Through evaluating how to transition to a wellbeing economy, students will assess the socio-economic and political feasibility and value in how this approach can contribute to sustainability transformations at the local, regional and national level.

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Working with Communities (S2)

Module code: UL411984
Semester Two
Module Tutor: [Eilidh Macphail]

Working with communities is these days a vital part of many job roles and voluntary positions, which brings with it many considerations, especially in rural communities.

This module will get students to consider key ideas from community development literature, with a view to understanding and developing the practical skills required to work with communities, from organising events, meetings and research, to communication, project management and leadership.

Students will put this knowledge and skills into practice by reflecting on how these could apply to their own local community/workplace.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Critically reflect on the meaning and understandings of "community"
2. Critically analyse the theoretical concepts involved in working with communities and explore their practical application
3. Critically reflect on theoretical understandings of leadership within communities and critically examine what this looks like in practice
4. Critically reflect on the main issues and opportunities which may arise when working with communities

Assessment 1: Essay, 2500 words (50%)
Assessment 2: Reflective report of continuous discussion board activities, 2500 words (50%)

Indicative Content:

Throughout the module, students will gain an understanding of community development literature and how it informs practical skills such as event organisation, meeting planning and recording, community research, project and risk management, communication, leadership and group work, networking, and ethical considerations involved in community work. Students will be asked to consider this in the context of their own local communities/workplaces.

Research Dissertation

Module code: UF811103
Over two semesters
Module contact: Rosalind Bryce
Module Leader: Eilidh Macphail

This module aims to provide students with an opportunity to undertake a sustained, rigorous and independent piece of research in relation to their MSc programme.

The dissertation must consist of original work and will usually involve the collection of new data. It should be informed by the theoretical and practical knowledge and expertise which the participant has developed throughout their previous MSc modules and other experience, focusing on a theme, topic or problem which is relevant to the personal research interests of the participant and their programme of study. The resulting dissertation should not only present and interpret the research findings but also critically evaluate the research design and methodology employed and identify the outcomes of the research in terms of actual or planned developments and changes.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Identify a research topic and present a written and verbal proposal for detailed discussion.
2. Clearly identify an appropriate research methodology and gather data systematically for further analysis and interpretation.
3. Submit a written dissertation on the research thesis that clearly presents the background, research methodology, results, analysis & interpretation, conclusions, and bibliography within an agreed framework and style of presentation.

Assessment 1: project proposal - oral presentation (20%)
Assessment 2: 15,000-word Dissertation (80%)

Indicative Content:
Relating to the development of the research proposal, participants will be expected to:
- Identify a topic, theme or problem for investigation and provide a rationale for its selection;
- Identify a series of specific research questions and objectives for the proposed investigation;
- Formulate a research design appropriate to the problem or topic identified, which identifies the methods to be used and explains why they have been selected; highlights any potential constraints or likely problems, and sets out a feasible plan of work or timetable;
- Negotiate the research proposal with the supervisor, employer and colleagues where appropriate;

Relating to the conduct of the research and the writing of a dissertation:
- Identify and critically analyse existing literature in the chosen research area

- Collect data in a systematic and rigorous way using the chosen research methods in appropriate and ethically sound ways;
- Critically evaluate the research design and methodology employed;
- Analyse and interpret data in the light of the research questions and hypotheses identified in the rationale; and in the light of any additional research issues and questions which have emerged during the course of the investigation;
- Consider the research findings in light of previous literature reviewed
- Produce an abstract, a bibliography and a dissertation on the investigation;

Relating to the course participant's reflections on the research process and potential applications of the findings:
- Identify potential and/or actual applications of the research findings (and potential constraints on effective application);
- Consider potential areas for further research and/or dissemination of the results

Further information

For further information on individual modules, please contact the Module Leader/Tutor

Programme Leader: Rosalind.bryce.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Updated 25/06/24